

NSA BRIEFING

2 March 1955

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I. Deliberate Israeli attack Egyptian border
post 28 Feb. suggests revival tougher policy
toward Arabs linked with Ben Gurion.

A. Attack came 10 days after Ben Gurion
returned to cabinet as defense minister.

B. US army attaché Tel Aviv believes attack
predetermined and well-planned military
operation--not retaliatory raid--in view:

1. Numbers involved--several Israeli
infantry platoons.
2. Type, amount explosives used--water
tower and several buildings flattened--
some 37 Egyptians killed--30 wounded.

II. Change from Prime Minister Sharett's moderate
policy may be caused growing internal
pressure positive action. Strong sentiment
for this among "activist" army elements.

III. Other border incidents likely. Israel not
expected intentionally to provoke general
hostilities.

DIA review(s) completed.

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐

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- IV. The current incident may have resulted in part from Israeli anger over the recent Egyptian execution of alleged Israeli spies.
- A. Israel has also repeatedly insisted that it cannot prevent incidents from developing under present armistice conditions.
- B. Major incidents of this kind (which tend to invite counter action that blurs question of responsibility) are probably used by Israel to draw UN and especially Western attention to the need of forcing the Arabs to agree to formal peace settlements.